

PRESS RELEASE



Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure

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Review Of U.S. Coast Guard Mission Performance To Be Focus Of Committee Hearing

Washington, D.C. – A Congressional subcommittee on Thursday will meet to review the Department of Homeland Security Inspector General’s annual report of Coast Guard mission performance for fiscal year 2005 and examine the Coast Guard’s efforts to balance its assets and personnel to carry out its various traditional and homeland security missions.

The hearing by the **U.S. House Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation**, chaired by **U.S. Rep. Frank LoBiondo (R-NJ)**, is scheduled to begin at **10 a.m. on Thursday, September 14th in 2167 Rayburn House Office Building**. A live webcast of the hearing will be available at the Committee’s website:

www.house.gov/transportation

Thursday’s Witness List

- **Rear Admiral Joseph L. Nimmich**, Assistant Commandant for Policy & Planning, U.S. Coast Guard
- **Edward Stulginsky**, Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Audits, Department of Homeland Security

Background Information

Following September 11, 2001, the Coast Guard was established as the lead Federal agency with responsibilities for maritime homeland security. As a result, the Coast Guard has expanded its missions to secure U.S. ports, vessels and coastal waters while also carrying out the Service’s traditional missions. Section 888 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 classified the Coast Guard’s traditional missions as “homeland security missions” and “non-homeland security missions”. The homeland security missions include Illegal Drug Interdiction, Undocumented Migrant Interdiction, Other Law Enforcement, Defense Readiness, and Ports, Waterways, and Coastal Security. The non-homeland security missions include Search and Rescue, Aids to Navigation, Ice Operations, Living Marine Resources, Marine Environmental Protection, and Marine Safety.

Because of concerns that the additional responsibilities could adversely affect the Coast Guard’s traditional missions, Section 888 prohibits the Secretary from substantially or significantly reducing the missions of the Coast Guard or the Coast Guard’s capability to perform these missions. To ensure that these concerns are monitored, the Act requires the Office of the Inspector General for

the Department of Homeland Security (OIG) to conduct an annual review of the Coast Guard's mission performance.

In July 2006, the OIG released its annual review of the Coast Guard's mission performance for fiscal year 2005. It evaluated the "resource hours" (the number of flight hours for aircraft and underway hours for boats and cutters), as well as the performance goals and results from fiscal years 2001 through 2005 to form conclusions.

The OIG found that the total resource hours for both homeland security missions and non-homeland security missions increased every year, with more resource hours dedicated to homeland security missions than non-homeland security missions. However, the report also concluded that the growth in resource hours has now leveled off and the Coast Guard will be unable to increase the total number of mission resource hours without the acquisition of additional aircraft, cutters, and boats.

This hearing, the latest in a series of Subcommittee hearings to oversee the Coast Guard's efforts to balance resources to carry out all of its missions, will examine in more detail the conclusions reached by the OIG in its latest annual review.

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